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Representing Renaissance Rome: Beyond Anachronism in Showtimes *The Borgias* (2011)

JAMES COOK

Picture the scene: the year is 1492, the date August 26th. Rodrigo Borgia—recently elected Pope—begins the procession towards his coronation as Alexander Sextus. The streets are thronged with his subjects, making their pious devotions to the newly-appointed father of their faith. With great pomp, he makes his way through the triumphal arches that line the streets extolling his virtues and predicting a return to the golden age of Rome.[1] As he draws closer to the Basilica of St Peter, the heralds signal his approach and, with miraculous prescience, begin to play Handel's *Zadok the Priest*…

Few historians would argue with much of the detail of this historical vignette and yet (it is to be hoped) one detail sticks out: *Zadok the Priest* being performed some 193 years before its composer was born. Why, then, was this music chosen for Showtime's *The Borgias,* the television show from which this depiction is drawn? For some, it could be seen to epitomise the apparently contradictory way in which early music is used and, more broadly, the past is scored in popular television, film, and videogame.[2] The very same episode makes full use of other examples of pre-existent music—far more temporally appropriate to the episode—and also newly-composed music free from the same questions of historical propriety. What then might we infer from this choice? That music is seen as less important than other aspects of otherwise well-researched historical dramas? That the audience are not expected to know any better? That writers, directors, producers, and composers do not either? That this was simply a mistake?

If the answer to any of the above is yes, then perhaps this is where the story ends. We can cast such choices as inauthentic and anachronistic and move on, safe in the knowledge that we know better. And yet, this seems a wholly unsatisfying and unsatisfactory response. It tells us nothing of the ways in which early music is used in popular media or how other music is employed to evoke the past, and it ignores the often highly imaginative and thoughtful act of scoring for popular media and the kinds of representational codes on which such actions depend. The principal contention of this book is that the evocation of the past in popular media is worthy of detailed analysis since it tells us much about how we, in the present, conceive of it. Central to this claim is the belief that music is not merely of lesser concern here but works on a level beyond mere composer biography or temporal propriety. Within this framework, my intention in this chapter is to offer a reading of the first episode of *The Borgias*, moving beyond ideas of anachronism or inauthenticity and,[3] in doing so, suggesting some broader ideas about approaches to the use of pre-existent early music in popular media. This is certainly not the only possible reading and others are positively welcomed.

Pre-existent Material in Film and Television

The use of early music in film and television taps into a long tradition of using pre-existent material. Such material functions differently from music that has been specifically composed for a film. As Anahid Kassabian has outlined in her seminal *Hearing Film* (2001, p. 70), the pre-existent creates 'affiliating identifications' and the newly composed 'assimilating identifications' (p. 3). In other words, the pre-existent plays on the relationship that the viewer has already formed with works whilst the newly composed attempts to control our relationship with the image on screen through the use of certain representational codes. To an extent,

according to Kassabian, this opens a broader hermeneutic field for scores that rely on pre-existent material.

Not all pre-existent music has the same role or effect and it is perhaps more useful to view 'affiliating' and 'assimilating' identities on a continuum rather than as binaries. Gorbman's (1987) division of musical meaning into 'pure', 'cultural', and 'cinematic musical codes' is perhaps helpful as a framework for understanding this (p. 13), though the degree to which any phenomenon could be understood as 'purely musical' should, of course, now be questioned[4] Take, for instance, the famous scene in *The Godfather: Part III* (1990) where an assassination attempt takes place during a performance of Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana,* mixing diegetic and non-diegetic use of the pre-existent operatic score. On a 'musical' level, Mascagni's score, full of operatic tension, heightens the dramatic tension. At a cultural level, it speaks of the 'high-brow' nature of the characters on screen as people who usually attend opera and even, for those with sufficiently detailed previous knowledge, invites parallels between the themes of the opera and the themes of the film.[5] Finally, in terms of cinematic code, this can be seen as an example of the frequently-used trope of anempathetic scoring.[6] We can even see this scene as the progenitor of, or at least an important staging post in, a cinematic musical code itself, picked-up—sometimes parodically, sometimes entirely straightfacedly—by many other films and television shows in which the mafia, and associated people or acts, are connected with opera.[7] Clearly, and as Mike Cormack (2006) has previously noted, pre-existent art music can engage with each of these codes simultaneously, producing multiple plausible meanings dependent, perhaps, on the competence of the audience. Those who failed to recognise the opera may not have understood the narrative parallels; those that failed to recognise it *as opera* may not grasp the cultural associations. Nonetheless, the 'musical' effect may have continued to have dramatic and narrative impact on most average viewers.

Pre-existent Early Music in Television and Film

Perhaps the most important question is whether the use of pre-existent early music is different from the use of the pre-existent art and popular music which most scholars discuss. Is it even fair, or helpful, to distinguish early music from these? The answer to this depends entirely on how people—composers, directors, sound engineers, listeners etc.—frame history (and, crucially, not just early history). Some early music is, after all, now a staple of the concert-hall repertoire and could therefore be seen as a part of the art-music canon. Similarly, as Elizabeth Upton (2012) has suggested, early music has often borrowed performance practice from the world of popular music.

There is no one answer to the question of whether early music either is or is not art music. Such a discourse has clearly changed with prevailing musical and historiographical trends. Writing in 1993, a period which, with the benefit of hindsight may be seen as something of a tipping point, Paula Higgins outlined some interesting and contrasting perspectives on this question: the 'petrified' early music of Einstein and Dahlhaus' conception (c. 1941 and 1967 respectively) giving way to classical chart saturation and even popular engagement by groups such as Enigma (Higgins, 1993). Clearly, for some, early music may represent the earliest phase of the central art-music tradition; for others, a clear break with it. Such a distinction depends on aesthetic, historiographic, and perhaps even ideological positions on the parts of scholars, performers, and listeners. One example may be drawn from early scholarly interest in the topic. As Andrew Kirkman (Kirkman, 2010, pp. 3-5) has noted, much of this focussed on the Mass Cycle since it could be seen as the first recognisably multi-movement form; a prime candidate for a kind of proto-symphony and therefore the primordial slime from which

our Great German Masters arose. Such early scholarship[8]—early but with an undeniably lasting reach—often spoke in terms of organic unity, melodic development, and proto-tonality.[9]

In his seminal essay on the art-music canon, Burkholder (1983) argued that it was such organicism that provided the fundamental aesthetic principle on which the canon of art music (a social construct) was founded.[10] Kerman had already described a process in which analysts (to him the evangelical wing of art music) sought to extend its reach by demonstrating how organicism is present in musics outside of the original canon of Germanic masterworks (1980, pp. 319-323). Early music has therefore, through certain analytical approaches, been constructed as a part of what became seen as the mainstream of music. Such analytical approaches are not without critique, however. Scholars such as Bent (1998) have attempted to root analysis of early music instead within its contemporary theoretical practice, viewing it as a repertoire to be understood in and on its own terms rather than for how it might connect to other arbitrarily selected points in musical history.

Performance too has tended to characterise early music either as a precursor to music of the common practice period or as a distinct break from it. Upton (2012) has framed the question as follows: 'was Early Music to be seen as a part of Classical music, representing an earlier stage in a narrative of the development of European musical style, or was it to be seen as unrelated to the Classical music that came later?' She has noted that, though 'classical' music was once held as 'normative', those who lived through the explosion of recorded popular music in the second half of the twentieth century began to view it as a 'temporally specific kind of music', with earlier musics therefore starting to sound out of place when performed with a 'classical' sound. Rather than seeking to adapt earlier music to modernise it (through the addition of more recently invented instruments, for instance), as once had been common,

postwar early music revivals instead began to attempt to approach the music 'on its own terms'. Without an unbroken performing tradition for this period, sounds from outside of the classical tradition combining scholarly approaches from the historically-informed performance practice movement with popular conceptions of the 'difference' of the past were sought. Upton's discussion of the repertoires from which such performers of early music sought their 'acceptable sounds' will be taken up in later chapters (see Breen (2017) and Nugent (2017), for instance).

A distinction between early music within or without the canon clearly still weighs heavily on approaches to performance and programming. We may still see echoes of these two positions in the manner in which early music is programmed in the concert hall and in recorded media today. Whilst many concerts will use art music from various different times, places, and genres, often without contextualisation other than as music that belongs in the concert hall, there can be a tendency to historicise the early music concert. Early music, treated from the position of outside of the musical mainstream, is less likely to be included alongside later art music; such concerts often attempt to provide a cultural and historical context. In doing so, a degree of the original cultural context is sought, perhaps suggesting that the status of art music is not quite sufficient to understand this music. Alternatively, such music can be treated as other forms of autonomous art music, mixed with other works from divergent times, places, and genres and treated as material to be re-interpreted for modern taste just as any other form of art music.[11] These divergent positions spring from two very different cultural and marketing positions—but both certainly co-exist today.

These divided approaches can have an impact on early music in screen media. Whether it is to be understood as ostensibly historicising may depend not only on the approach of the composer and director but also on the experience of the listener. Pre-existent art music in film is most frequently treated as giving an ahistorical connotation more linked to the kind of societal strata which regularly attends art-music concerts.[12] When treated as a part of this tradition, early music may very well have the same effect. By contrast, when positioned in contrast to this central tradition, early music may instead be seen as inherently historicising. This analysis may even be extended to musics more certainly within the central art music tradition but treated through the lens of the historically-informed performance tradition. This movement, which began for early and baroque music, has gradually extended to encompass a variety of different historical periods up to (and perhaps beyond) Elgar. A prime example of the impact that this kind of aesthetic approach to music can have on film would be the BBC film *Eroica* (2003). This film uses a period performance of Beethoven (by the *Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique* under Sir John Eliot Gardner) as a central part of its narrative. By extending aesthetic positions taken by the historically-informed performance movement to Beethoven's music, this film positions these works as historicising, replacing the traditional cultural and filmic conventions associated with them.

Pre-existent Music in *The Borgias*

Whilst the scene outlined at the outset of this chapter is probably the most immediately obvious use of pre-existent material in this episode, it is far from the only one. Instead, it is one of six cues which take pre-existent music from a variety of different sources. Maria and Stephen Kingsbury (2014) have recently proposed a reading of these, which they universally class as anachronistic, as offering a narrative which revolves around the articulation of private and

public space. I wish to offer an alternative interpretation here. Perhaps most importantly, I would argue that the music is far from anachronistic. Anachronism rather fails to describe the musical processes in *The Borgias*, or indeed in any other historically situated on-screen drama. *The Borgias* is not historical fact (if such a thing can be said to exist). It is a modern creation, setting a modern narrative in a historically constituted *but still essentially fictive setting*. As Ben Winters has recently argued, filmic reality 'negotiates subtly between constructions of the *real* and the *reel*' (2014, p. 2). Whilst his study focuses squarely on art music and therefore is perhaps only directly relevant to early music as construed in one particular way, it nonetheless provides a useful reminder that film is neither fully real or unreal.

Music in this kind of setting is always going to be problematic. Claudia Gorbman famously problematized the very concept of music in film, noting:

> nondiegetic shot or sound is the exception, not the rule—except in the case of music. Therefore: why music, in the tightly consolidated 'realistic' world of the sound film? It gives mood, pacing, emotion, yes—but why is it permitted into the narrative's regime at all? (1987, p. 4)

This is a crucial point. As Alexander Kolassa has recently opined when discussing the immersive potential of music in trans-media, 'what it means to be "realistic" with sound, and especially music, is never [...] a clear-cut issue' (2015). How is it then, that we can be so sure that chronologically inappropriate music should be considered as being unrealistic? That music came to be associated at all with a sense of filmic verisimilitude is largely an accident of history dating back to the days of the silent movie where, in lieu of recorded dialogue, live musical backing was used. These conventions were then retained into the non-silent music tradition with them becoming cinematic codes.[13] It goes without saying that these conventions of musical representation are a world away from the sound-world that would have been

experienced in Rome in 1492 and, to an extent, an historically-informed aesthetic approach to any of this music would depend on rejecting all of these sound conventions (and perhaps even the entirety of sound design). When viewed through a restrictive binary lens of anachronism versus appropriateness we are therefore left to negotiate a situation in which we must betray the conventions of film or of history. Essentially, a tension develops between the understood cinematic code where a score rooted in art music (often using a post-romantic musical language) is used in a manner that is overtly un-historical and what has become the cultural code of representation whereby some forms of (or perhaps approaches to) early music are understood as historicising. Pre-existent early music in this tradition must be seen as a more distancing act than the use of later art music since it reminds us of Gorbman's question 'why music?' as an intrusion into the otherwise-expected world on screen. Ironically, this might suggest that the more 'anachronistic' the work the less distancing and apparent it may be to the majority of the audience.

Jeonwong Joe (2006), when discussing the film *Amadeus* (1984), especially in regard to its negative scholarly reception (the film was fairly well received by critics and the public),[14] has usefully drawn comparisons between historical drama in popular media and the literary genre of historiographic metafiction (a literary genre that, despite its basis in history and engagement with historical figures is unapologetically fictionalised (p. 59)). Her insight might helpfully shed some light on the kinds of aesthetic principles we see at work in media such as *The Borgias. Amadeus,* she notes, reflects a 'postmodern zeitgeist which questions the much-presumed objectivity of historical truth' (p. 70). In it, 'factual truth' may be distorted or disregarded when it gets in the way of 'poetic or dramatic truth' (Marshall, 1997, pp. 173-174). Citing Hutcheon (1988, pp. 128-129), she notes that 'historiographic metafiction, like postmodernist architecture and painting, is overtly and resolutely historical—though,

admittedly, in an ironic and problematic way that acknowledges that history is not the transparent record of any sure "truth"' (p. 71). According to Joe, whilst *Amadeus* is not as overtly political or as ironic as more recognisable metafiction, understanding it in a 'broader cultural and intellectual context of postmodernism could justify the film's "injustice" to *a* history' (p. 71). We may see many of the choices in *The Borgias* (as will be outlined below) in a similar light.

Crucially, the history to which *Amadeus* does 'injustice' is one that has been constructed and defended as a central ideological tenet of art music. Its soundtrack too disregards the 'unity' of many pre-existent works by Mozart by liberally cutting them in the editing studio so that they better fit the on-screen action. This practice is nothing new and frequently passes without mention. The negative attention the practice received in this film (see Horrowitz, (1992)) must relate to the degree to which the 'unity' of canonic masterpieces is held as central to their aesthetic identity. That the film made use of the historically informed ensemble *The Academy of St Martin and the Fields* and therefore could be seen to position itself as offering an informed historical window on music history, rather than simply using music from it as material to be manipulated, may have deepened scholarly unease.[15]

Arguably, there is a less clearly defined historical canon at play with early music than that invoked by *Amadeus.* Whilst the canon may exert a powerful influence on how art music may be received on screen, early music perhaps has a more flexible relationship, even if only due to levels of public knowledge (real or imagined) about the past. For our purposes, as musical and cultural historians of the Renaissance and scholars of screen media, we therefore must work harder to judge what can be considered as anachronistic (or perhaps unrealistic) from the

point of view of reception history rather than merely working out the date of composition. There are plenty of elements which play into this and many, such as the link between sacred space and vocal music,[16] will be discussed later in this book. These factors play into a musical iconography of understood conventions and these elements, which form a sort of postmodern bricolage, are far more important than the date of composition on its own–though this may form an element of the overall picture. Certainly, the postmodern aesthetic appears to offer the best course for understanding music in *The Borgias.* In typically postmodern fashion, the composer employs a wide palette, taking a broad range of generic, geographical, historic, and aesthetic conventions to create a dialogue between past and present (and the years in between) and the conventions of television and of early music.

Pre-existent Music and Narrative in *The Borgias*

Having made some general points about the role or effect of early music in film and television, it seems apt to return more definitively to my principal case study for this chapter, episode one of *The Borgias,* and specifically the recent analysis by Maria and Stephen Kingsbury. Even if, as I have shown, anachronism fails to describe fully what happens musically in *The Borgias*, Kingsbury and Kingsbury are correct that the works on which they focus are potent acts replete with extramusical meaning. This is not, as they argue, because they are anachronistic but because they are both pre-existing and overtly historicising. Regardless of whether the works are recognised by the audience, either as belonging to a particular period or exactly identified, they are clearly musically different from the rest of the score: regardless of the background or training of the listener, they stand out. Importantly, they stand out most clearly not as being too modern for Renaissance Rome, but too historical for a 'normal' television soundtrack, a point emphasised by the general use of historically informed performance techniques throughout

most of the cues. If they are 'anachronistic' they are surely more so as interventions into modern screen media than as interventions into Renaissance Rome.

Rather than four pre-existent works 'used at five significant points in the narrative', as Kingsbury and Kingsbury (2014) argue, there are actually five used at six points. I propose to examine each of these cues by what I see as their effect or function, rather than in the order in which they appear. For me, four of these cues serve to give us an insight into the characters' emotional state, advance the narrative and, potentially, highlight the intended focus of the episode, and series. The two remaining cues are quite different. One seems, as Gorbman (2006) has noted for Kubrik's *Eyes wide shut,* to give a sense of the director's agency in a knowing and almost parodic manner. The other seems to be a more straightforward setting of the scene through cultural association. As always, each of these operate at different levels dependant on the audience's background.

I will begin with the larger group of cues. These consist of three different works, Gesualdo's *O vos omnes* and *Jerusalem surge,* the latter which occurs twice, and the plainchant introit to the *Requiem* mass. At the level of cultural codes, these works have a clear link with death. Both works by Gesualdo come from the *Tenebrae* service—one of the more visually dramatic, even theatrical, of the services of the liturgy—which takes place to signify the time between the death and rebirth of Christ and at which candles are gradually extinguished, leaving the congregation in darkness. In keeping with this theme, *O vos omnes* is heard whilst we witness Pope Innocent VIII on his death bed. The music, as shown by example 1, is appropriately turbulent, exploiting frequent chromatic shifts.[17] The text, which speaks of great sorrow, is clearly appropriate to the death of a pope, and the liturgical occasion even more so. Through

apostolic succession, the pope is seen by Catholics as the head of the church on earth, having inherited that role from the Apostle Peter who was chosen for that role by Christ, the original head of the church, before his death. This point is reinforced in the coronation scene where Alexander Sextus is described as the 'earthly residence of our lord, Jesus Christ'. The death of the Pope here *is* the death of Christ, in symbolic terms at least.[18]

<Insert example 1 here>

The next work from the *Tenebrae* service to be used is *Jerusalem surge*. The text initially appears to be very appropriate to the scene. 'Jerusalem, surge, et exue te vestibus jucunditatis [Arise, O Jerusalem, and put off your garments]' is heard as the newly-elected Alexander Sextus dresses in papal garb for the first time—rising and putting off his garments. The common contemporary allegorical representation of Rome as the 'New Jerusalem' makes this association even stronger.[19] However, the full text of the work is rather more problematic: 'Arise, O Jerusalem, and put off your garments of rejoicing; cover yourself with sack-cloth and ashes: for the Saviour of Israel has been slain in your midst.' Similarly, for all the triumphant euphony of the opening of the work (example 2), by bar 5 dissonant 7ths and chromatic shifts move the music towards the darker sound world of *O vos omnes. Prima facie*, this does not seem to fit well with the triumphant dressing of a victorious papal candidate. However, this period is still very much a part of the interregnum—since the new Pope is yet to be crowned—and the association with the period between Christ's death and rebirth is still highly appropriate. This same work is repeated again as the Pope enters the church for his coronation. The stark divide between the instrumentally accompanied *Zadok the Priest* heard outside the church and the entirely vocal *Jerusalem surge* also neatly depicting the sacred/secular instrumental/*a capella* divide that we often see: an example of cinematic codes in action. This second repetition of the work is again used for dressing the new pope. Indeed, the music finishes at the exact moment the Papal tiara is placed on his head. To my mind, this reinforces the reference

to garments and suggests that the allusion to dressing in clothes of mourning is far from co-incidental. If we set this as central to the understanding of the scenes, it shifts the focus on to Rodrigo and his family and their experience of attaining the papacy. This is further reinforced by the next cue, directly following on from *Jerusalem surge,* which is the plainchant introit from the *Requiem.* In terms of pure musical codes (and indeed practical concerns), plainchant makes an obvious choice at this point since it foregrounds the conversation between Cesare and Lucrezia whilst, on a cultural level, also making reference to the sacred nature of the ceremony. The choice of the *Reqiuem* seems stranger. The cultural connotations are inescapable: it poses the question 'who are we mourning'? This question is neatly answered in the following scene when Alexander Sextus states 'I am Rodrigo Borgia no longer. I am Alexander Sextus... I am no longer "I". I am... we' before collapsing. The interregnum has finished with the rebirth of the pope and the death of Rodrigo Borgia. If we revisit some of the earlier dialogue, for instance where Rodrigo's mistress states that she is in mourning for her family, it seems that this is how the Borgias understand their circumstances too.

<Insert example 2 here>

The music, made apparent through its obvious difference, seems—through various cultural codes—to foreground the experience of the Borgias through a period in which the head of their household dies and is reborn as Pope. Read in this way, perhaps the *Tenebrae* works are not just about the death of the Pope and his resurrection in another form, but the start of Rodrigo's own period of transformation from man to Pope.

To finish, I wish to consider the final two pieces of pre-existent music from this episode to show some of the different ways that they are used. The first to be discussed is not mentioned by Kingsbury and Kingsbury, a pavane, anonymous, but part of a collection of lute tablatures

printed by Pierre Attaingnant.[20] *Prima facie,* it is the only piece of pre-existent music not to be anachronistic. Despite this, to anyone but the small number of people with a detailed knowledge of the printer's biography, this appears to be one of the most out of place. It gives a humorous backing to a scene which shows the apocryphal practice of checking the gender of the Pope.[21] At a musical level, the strong rhythmic opening which ties with the cardinals processing into the room undermines the seriousness of the situation. The choice of recording furthers this sense of distance since, in it, the heavy amplification and artificial reverb makes the lute sound rather like an electric guitar. The fact that this is a secular dance form—in fact a pavane, generally acknowledged as being Spanish and therefore culturally appropriate to the Spanish-origin Borgias in one sense—completely undermines the usual cinematic expectation of vocal music in a sacred space. The musical and filmic conventions here serve to undermine any sense of a serious sacred context for this meeting of cardinals. When combined with the unusual camera angles and humorous dialogue—for instance the line 'habet duos testiculos et benes pendentes [he has two testicles, well hung]'—one must wonder if this scene is designed as a knowing wink by the director, acknowledging his understanding that the papal gender check never really happened. If this is indeed the case, it supports the assertion that the date of composition is one of the least important elements of a work's reception history when re-packaged in a film or television context.

Coming full circle, the final piece of pre-existent music to consider is the one with which I began this chapter, *Zadok the Priest.* Whilst perhaps the most striking to those with a knowledge of music history, it is actually rather appropriate. The most obvious cultural connotation that can be taken from *Zadok the Priest* is that it is coronation music. At the level of filmic convention, this is clearly supported too by the vast number of films which use it for this purpose. More than that, considering the stark divide between the sacred and secular space

given by the change from instrumental to vocal scoring at the very moment that the church door opens, this seems to emphasise that the Pope is a secular King as well as a spiritual leader, as emphasised in the later dialogue and the coronation with the triple crown. The sacred and secular aspects of the coronation are elegantly separated in the musical sphere as well as in the visual and therefore emphasised. I wonder too whether the total lack of emotional engagement between the music and the situation is intended to emphasise the narrative of Rodrigo Borgia's death and rebirth as the Pope. Directly following the coronation, the new Pope speaks of being 'so alone out there'. Perhaps the lack of emotional insight given by the music at this point is representative of this detachment between the audience, both within the show and those watching it, and the protagonist.

For me, rather than being anachronistic and haphazard, the choice of music in *The Borgias* is appropriate and reminds us that the intended focus of the series *The Borgias* is just that: the Borgias. Similarly, I am tempted to revisit the title of the first episode 'The poisoned chalice'; perhaps it refers not to Cesare's weapon of choice at the end of the episode but to the papacy itself. Early music here is used, in typical postmodern fashion, at multiple different semantic levels: sometimes historicising, sometimes ahistorical, but always well-considered. To understand it, and to appreciate it fully, we must move beyond anachronism.

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[1] The coronation was well documented by numerous contemporary diarists, such as Stefano Infessura (Infessura, 1890), Jacopo Gherardi (Gherardi, 1904), Bernadino Zambotti (Zambotti, 1937), Gaspare Pontani (Pontani, 1907).

[2] For a discussion of the use of the term early music in this volume, see the introduction. This is certainly not an isolated phenomenon. See, for instance 'O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden' from Bach's *St Matthew Passion* in *The Pillars of the Earth* (2010), in which a German composition from 1727 is used to depict the collapse of a newly-built church roof in 12th-century England, or in *Elizabeth* (1998) where both Elgar's 'Nimrod' from the *Enigma Variations* and 'Requiem Aeternam' from Mozart's *Requiem* are used alongside period music. As I will argue here for *The Borgias*, these musical choices are often entirely rational and arguably exceptionally well chosen, even if they are not (in any way) chronologically appropriate.

[3] This is not to suggest that anachronism is an irredeemably pejorative term, even if it is often used in this sense. Rather, I will suggest that the nature of historical drama on television makes questions of temporal propriety (especially in the case of music) too complex to allow for simple judgements as to what is 'in' or 'out' of time.

[4] Following the insights of the so-called 'new musicology' from the 70s onwards, the idea of any effect taking place at a purely musical level is problematic. Whilst much literature from the perspective of music psychology has sought to demonstrate pure musical effects through scientific measurement of responses to musical phenomena, most musicological literature instead understands these from a cultural perspective. Nonetheless, it does seem possible to rehabilitate Gorbman's views as essentially two levels of cultural code, one operating at a level which excludes more people and requires more knowledge, and one operating at a level that most average viewers would comprehend. For example, though the idea of major/minor tonality representing happy/sad thoughts is clearly not a 'pure musical' code since societies may be found which would not understand this music in this way, it would be fair to expect the majority of those watching a Hollywood film to have this perspective. What Gorbman may have construed as a 'pure musical' code is instead simply a broadly understood cultural code operating at a deep level of the musical language.

[5] For an exposition on this theme and indeed the 'operatic' quality of the entire trilogy, see Citron (2004); for a discussion of the narrative purpose of the opera within the film, see Franke (2006).

[6] Examples abound, from Bach's Goldberg variations in *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991), or Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata in *Misery* (1990), to Stanley Kubrik's *A Clockwork Orange* (1972), perhaps the most famous example due to the intimate connection between music and violence, in which the protagonist and anti-hero's violent actions are most frequently scored against a backdrop of Rossini and (especially) Beethoven or committed whilst whistling 'Singing in the rain'.

[7] This is not to imply a simplistic causal relationship. The film's status no doubt marks it as especially appropriate for referencing by other films but there is wider web of allusions at play which may reference myriad other associations such as the Italian origins of both opera and the mafia.
[8] See, for example, studies such as Ambros (1891) and Bukofzer (1950).
[9] See, for instance, the concept of Machaut's *Messe de notre dame* growing from a single six-note motif that 'may be regarded as the generating cell of this vast composition' that may be encountered 'in each of the sections, but in addition … gives rise to imitations, to fugal entries, to repetitions, to counter-melodies in long time fugal entries, to repetitions, to counter-melodies in long time values though this' (Armand Machabey in Reese, 1940, pp. 356-357).
[10]The argument that the canon was a social construct was advanced, perhaps somewhat more controversially, by Kerman (1980) some three years earlier. For more historiographical discussion of the force of organicism, and an attempt to problematise its casual use, see Kerman (1980), Solie (1980), and Levy (1987). Recent approaches to scholarship on Schenker (see Snarrenberg (1994), Korsyn (1993), or Duerksen (2008)) often seeks to contextualise his analysis through the lens of historically-rooted organicist principles, showing that, though now not understood to represent a natural, foundational aspect of all 'serious' music, organicism—and beliefs about its centrality to the musical experience—nonetheless formed a profound social and cultural backdrop to Schenker and his contemporaries.
[11] Instances of 'historicised' programming might include CD projects such as the Binchois Consort's *Henry V* or their forthcoming *Music for the 100 Years' War*, which seek to present music from a discrete chronological and national area, whilst making an effort to pay some respect to liturgical concerns. In contrast, for an approach that treats early music ahistorically, see the famous Hilliard Ensemble *Officium Novum* album which included the Saxophonist Jan Garbarek (the orientalist aspects of this project are a fascinating topic which deserve deep exploration in their own right), or Karl Jenkins recent arrangement of *Gaudete,* which in itself presents curiously orientalist sounds.
[12] There is, of course, far more to it than this. Beethoven and psychopathy seem to have a recent affinity, for instance.
[13] For more on sound in silent cinema see Marks (1997). For an excellent account of the general development of film music see Cooke (2008).
[14] See, for instance, '*Amadeus* is dangerous to your musical health. It may prevent you from appreciating Mozart's music, and prevent and poison your capacity for intelligent listening to all kinds of Music' (Maurice Zam, quoted in Kupferberg, 1986, p. 240) or *'Amadeus,* whatever its virtues as entertainment, is offensive in its injustice to both Mozart and Salieri, and will unfortunately give many in its extensive audience and enduringly twisted view of these composers [...]. In the end, *Amadeus* is an amorphous muddle of ideas crippled by their contradiction of recorded facts, yet slick and overlaid with a varnish of cinematic éclat' (Lang, 1985, p. 21).
[15] An Adornian scholarly distrust of popular culture and those who consume it may also be at play here. As Joe (2006) notes, despite an equally problematic historical narrative the Pushkin/Rimsky-Korsakov *Mozart and Salieri* is generally respected by scholars. Perhaps the high/low art divide can play into reception with greater trust to make critical judgements about historical narratives afforded to those who consume opera, but not those who watch films.
[16] See, for instance Whittaker (2017).
[17] The opening 14 bars (in modern edition) of Gesualdo's work are repeated in the episode before the work continues to the end of the scene.
[18] Such symbolism would have been familiar to Christians of the period. Perhaps the earliest historical representation of the Pope *as* Christ comes from the St Catherine of Sienna who, in her 196th letter—to Pope Gregory XI—addressed him as 'o sweet Christ on earth', contrasting him with 'Christ in heaven'. She died in 1390 and was canonised in 1461.
[19] The historical precedents for this reading are multifarious, particularly during the fifteenth century. The allegory was given new impetus by the vast cultural project of Pope Nicholas V (1447-55) which sought to make Rome a city of central cultural and historical importance. For an overview of this project, see Maccarrone (1952, pp. 235-262). For the concept of Rome as the New Jerusalem, see Battisti (1960, pp. 72-95).
[20] In particular, the recording used is that by Ronn McFarlane from his 1992 album *Between Two Hearts*.
[21] This belief rests partly on the survival of *sedes stercoraria*— thrones with holes in the middle— (one is kept in the Louvre and one in the Vatican Museums) and partly on the mythical figure (highly influential in medieval and Renaissance thought) of Pope Joan, a female Pope who gave birth on the way to her coronation. For an account of the history of such a claim, including a discussion of early attestations both to it validity and invalidity, see DiMarco (2008, pp. 66-67); for an in-depth discussion of the ceremony at which the thrones were used, see Ingolgia (1999); for Pope Joan, see Boureau (2001).